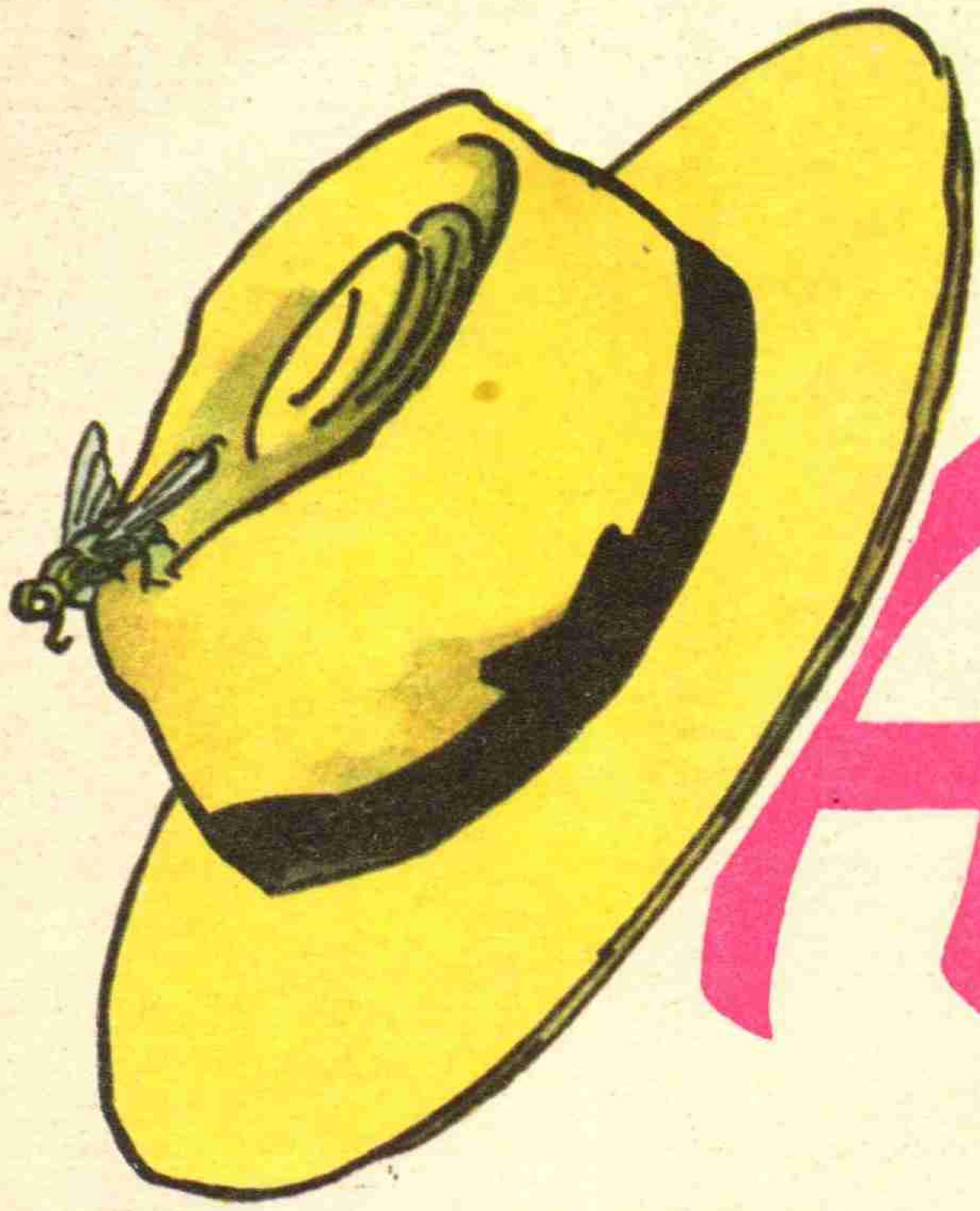
NIKOLAI NOSOV

SPL 5--

A LIVE HAT

Nikolai Nosov

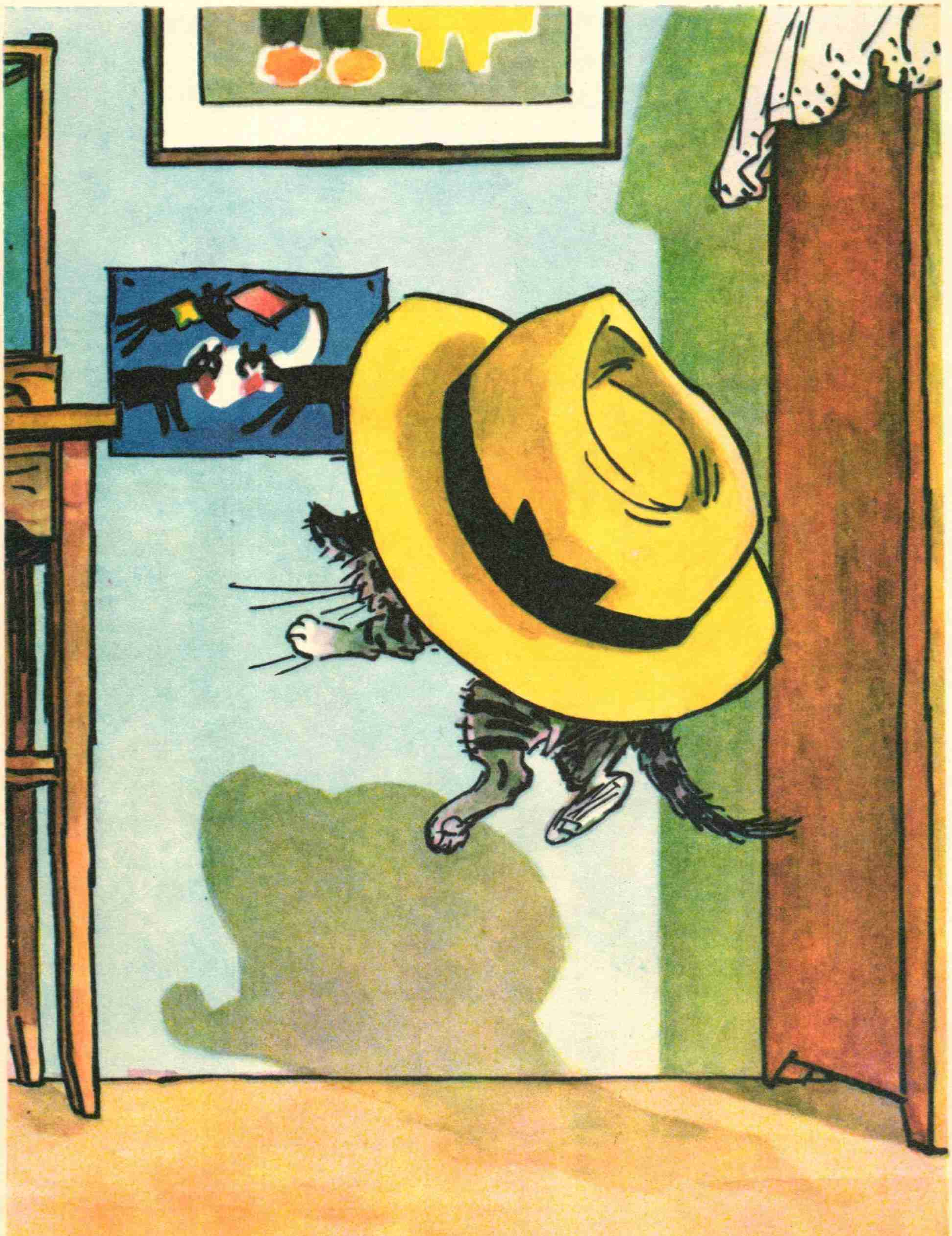


A Live Hat

Drawings
by *Ivan Semyonov*

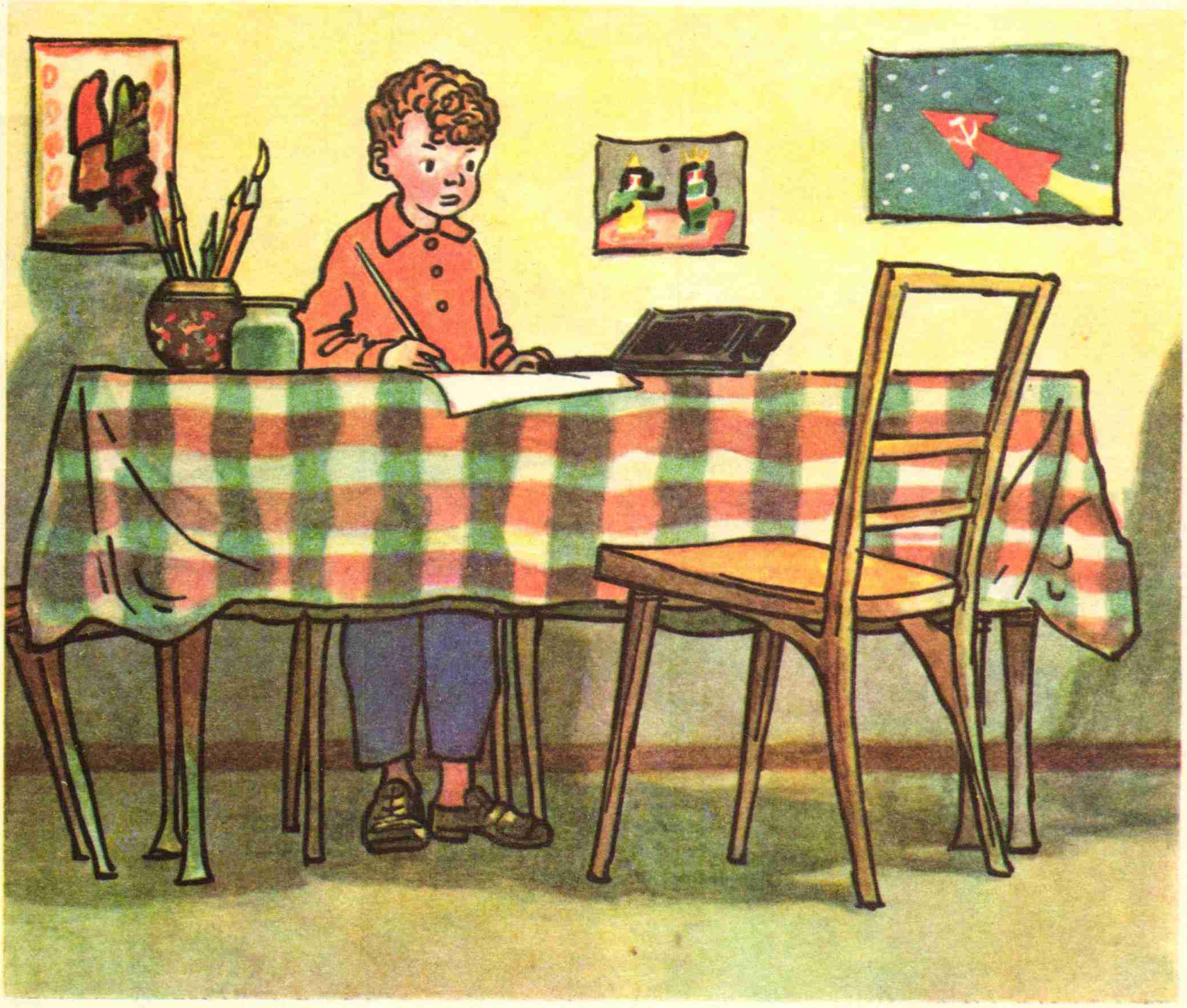
Translated
by *Fainna Glagoleva*

Raduga Publishers
Moscow



Murzik was a kitten. He was sitting on the floor by the chest of drawers, trying to catch a fly. There was a hat lying on the very edge of the chest. Murzik saw the fly settle on it. He jumped up and sunk his claws into the hat. It slid off the chest, Murzik lost his grip and tumbled down. Then the hat came floating down on top of him. Where was Murzik now?

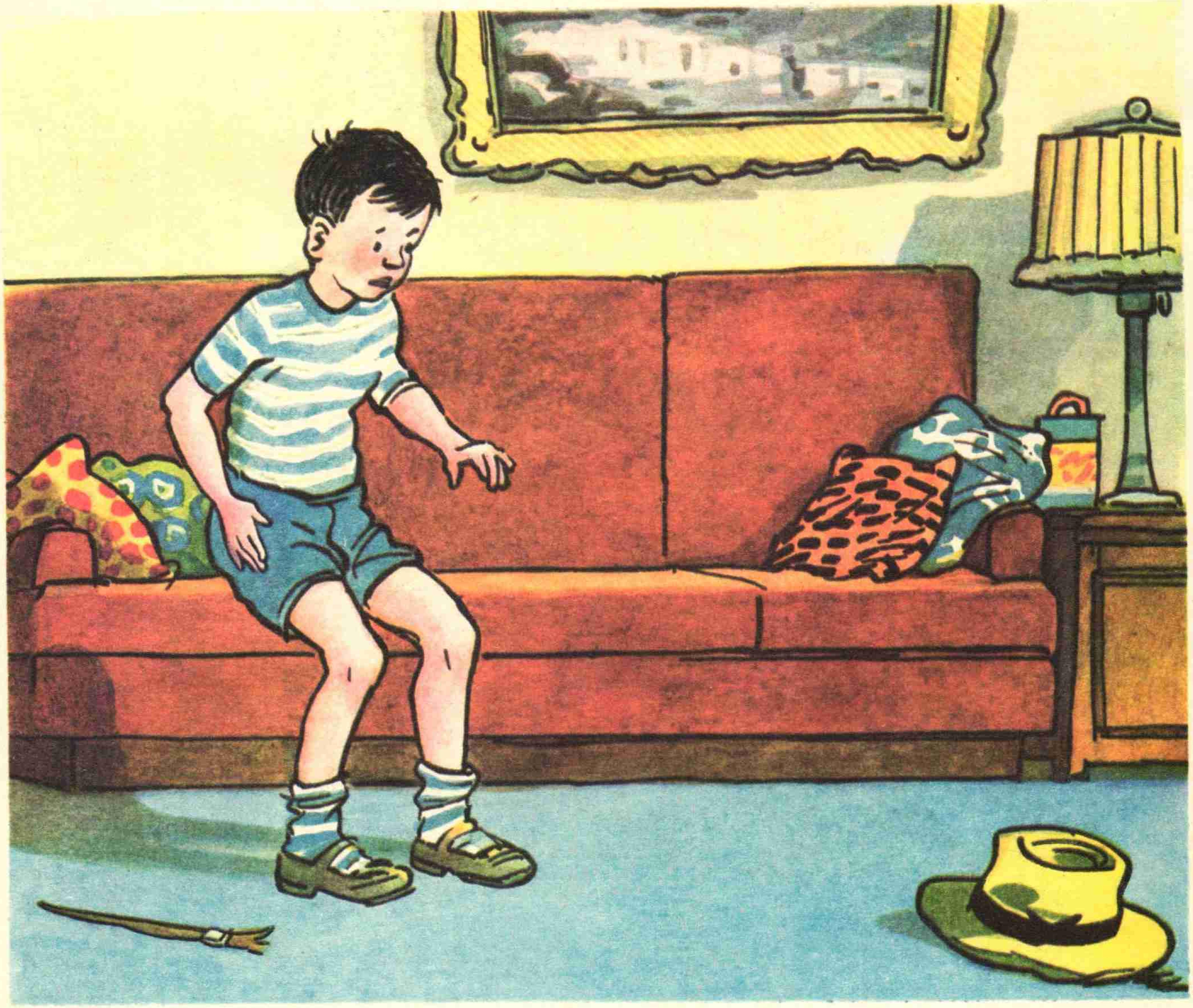
Vova and Vadik were busy at their colouring books. They hadn't seen the hat fall on Murzik, though they had heard a strange noise.



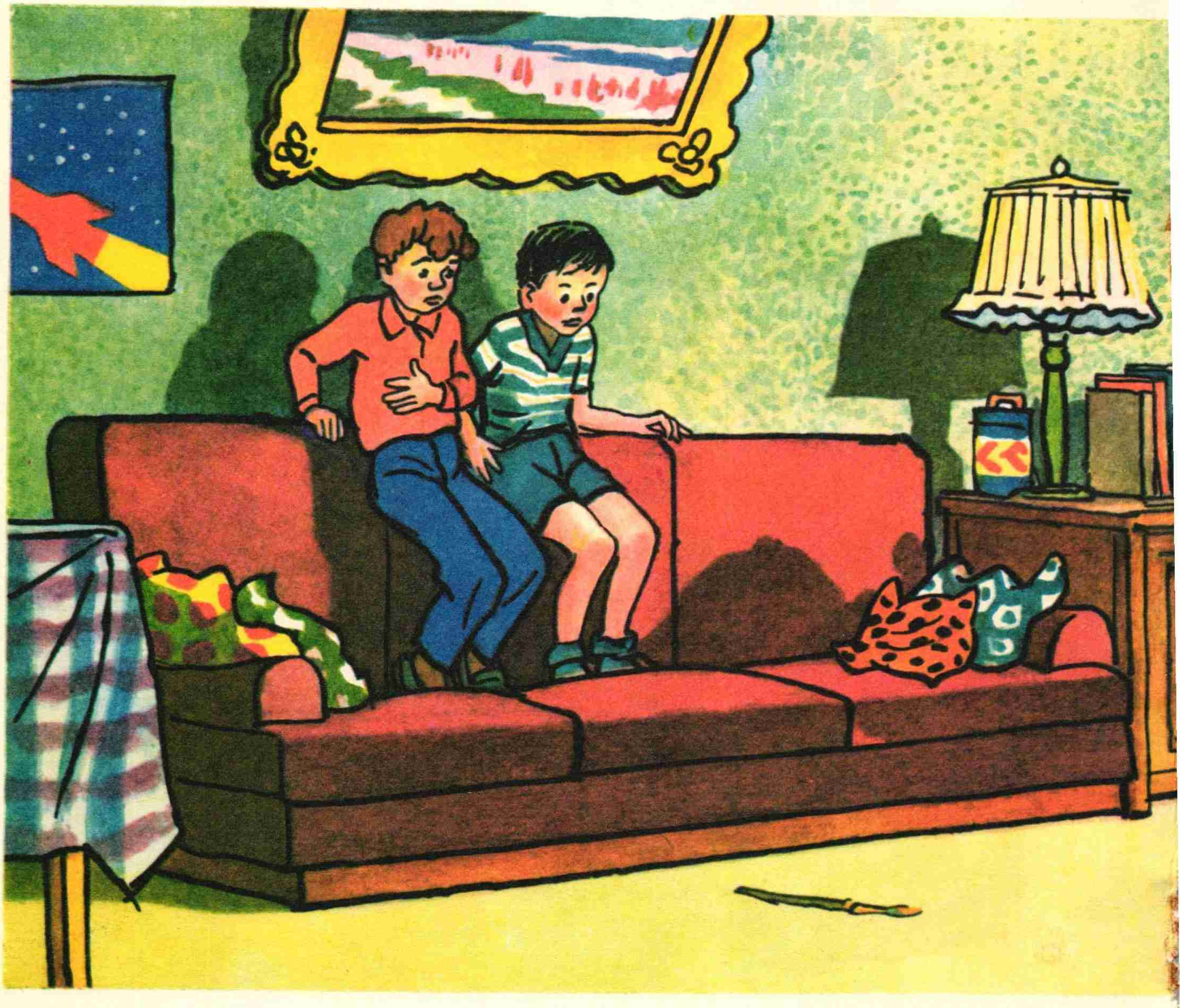
Vova turned to see what it was. There was the hat on the floor. He went over to pick it up. But as soon as he bent down he cried:

"Help!"

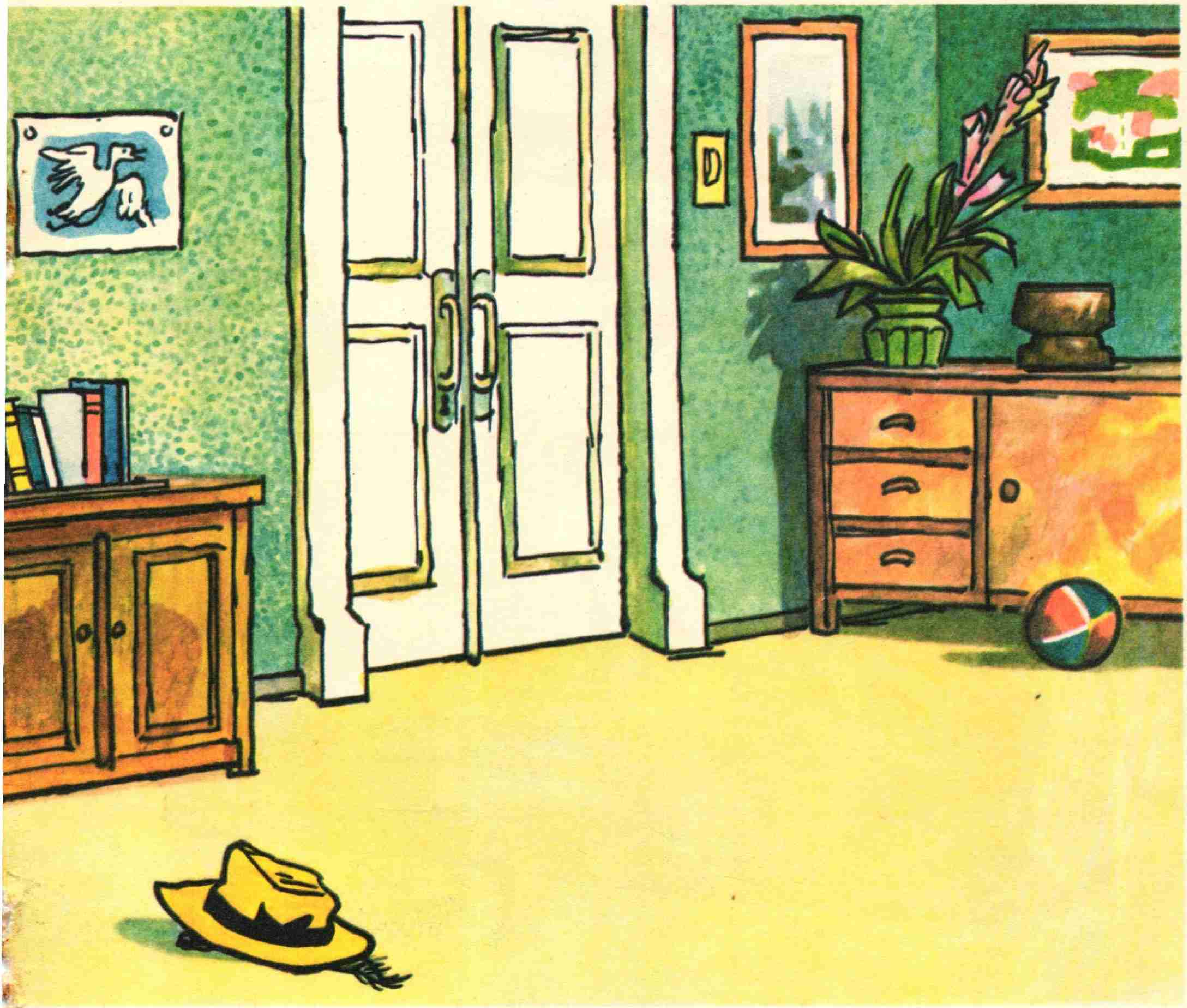
"What's the matter?" Vadik asked.
"It's a-a-alive!"
"Who?"



"The h-h-hat!"
"Don't be silly."
"B-b-but it is!"
Vadik got up to see for himself.



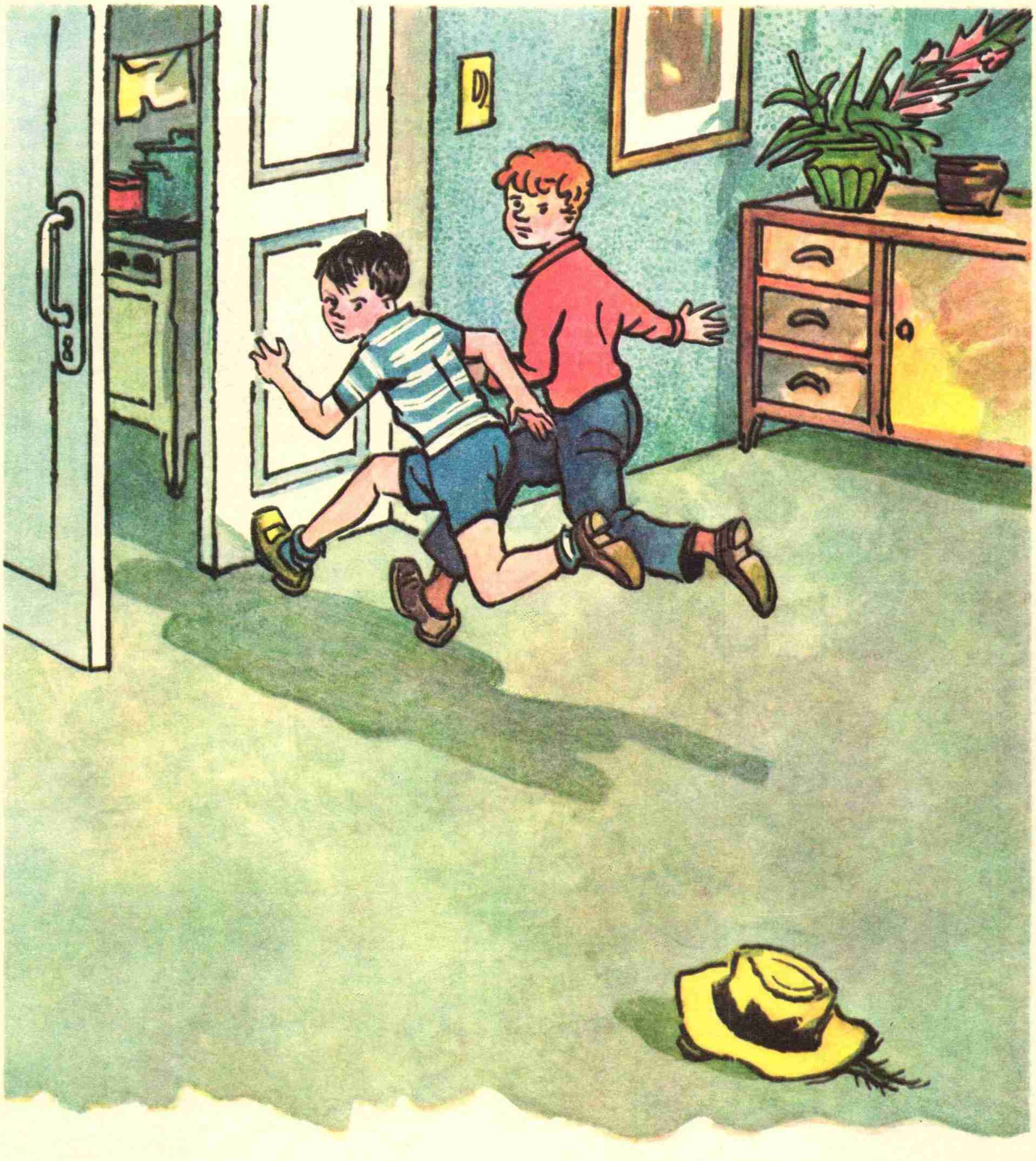
All of a sudden the hat began creeping towards him.
He screamed and ran for the sofa.
Vova jumped right up after him.



Meanwhile, the hat had crawled to the middle of the room and stopped. The boys' hearts were pounding as they watched it. The hat headed towards them.

"Oh!"

"Help!"



They jumped down and dashed out of the room. When they reached the kitchen they slammed the door behind them.

"What's the matter with that hat? Why is it creeping around like that?" Vova wondered.

"Maybe someone's pulling it along by a string."

"Go have a look."

"Let's go together. I'll take the poker. If it starts creeping towards us, I'll hit it hard."

"Wait! I'll take a poker, too."

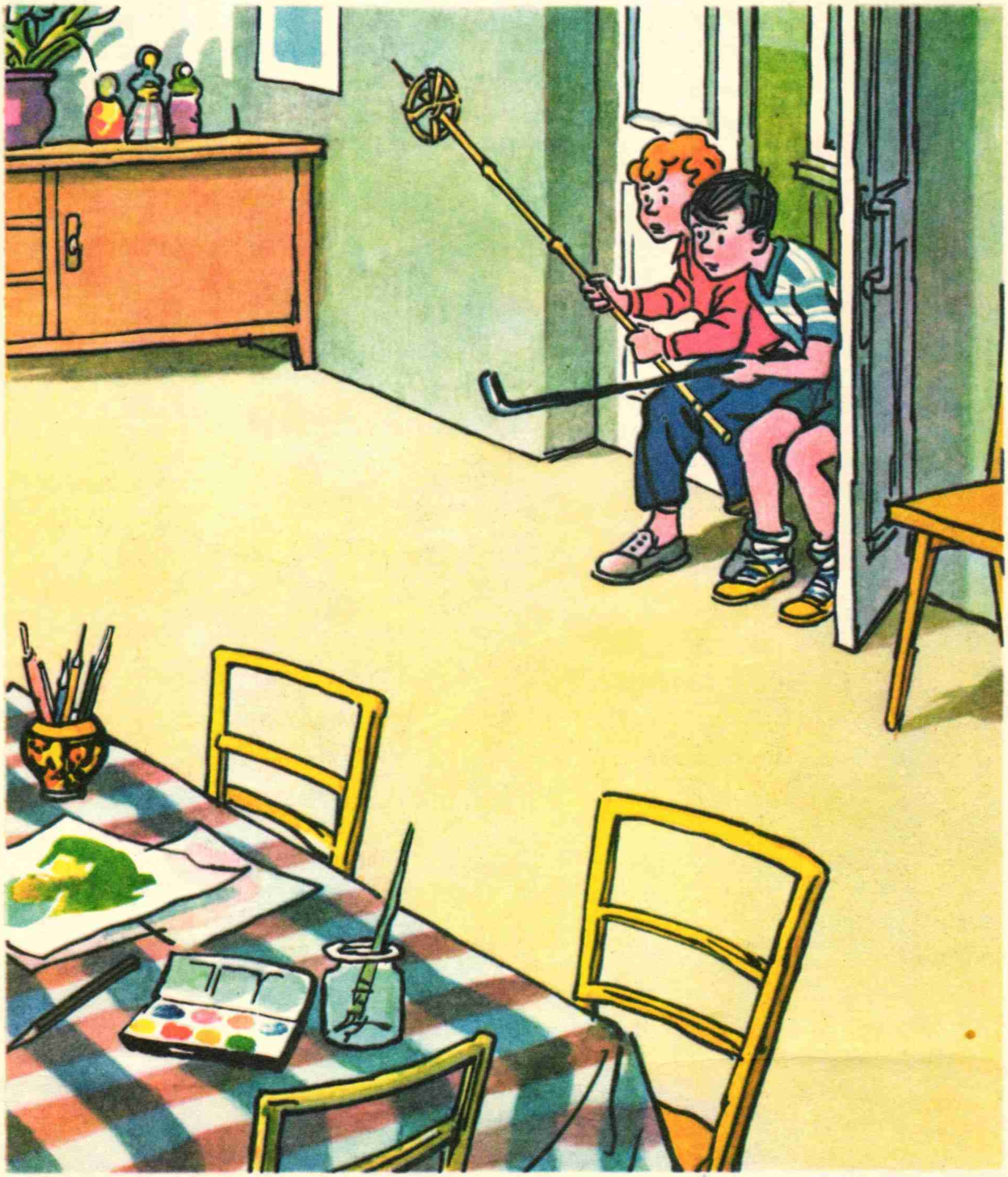
"We only have one."

"Then I'll take a ski pole."

They armed themselves with the poker and the ski pole, opened the door slowly and looked out.

"Where is it?"

"Over there, in the corner."



The hat just lay there on the floor.
"See? It's afraid of us now!"
"Watch me scare it," said Vova.
He began whacking his poker against the leg of the table.
"Hey, you!"
But the hat did not move.
"Let's pelt it with potatoes," said Vadik.

They went back into the kitchen for potatoes and then began throwing them at the hat. Finally, Vadik hit it. The hat jumped into the air and yowled: MIAOW!

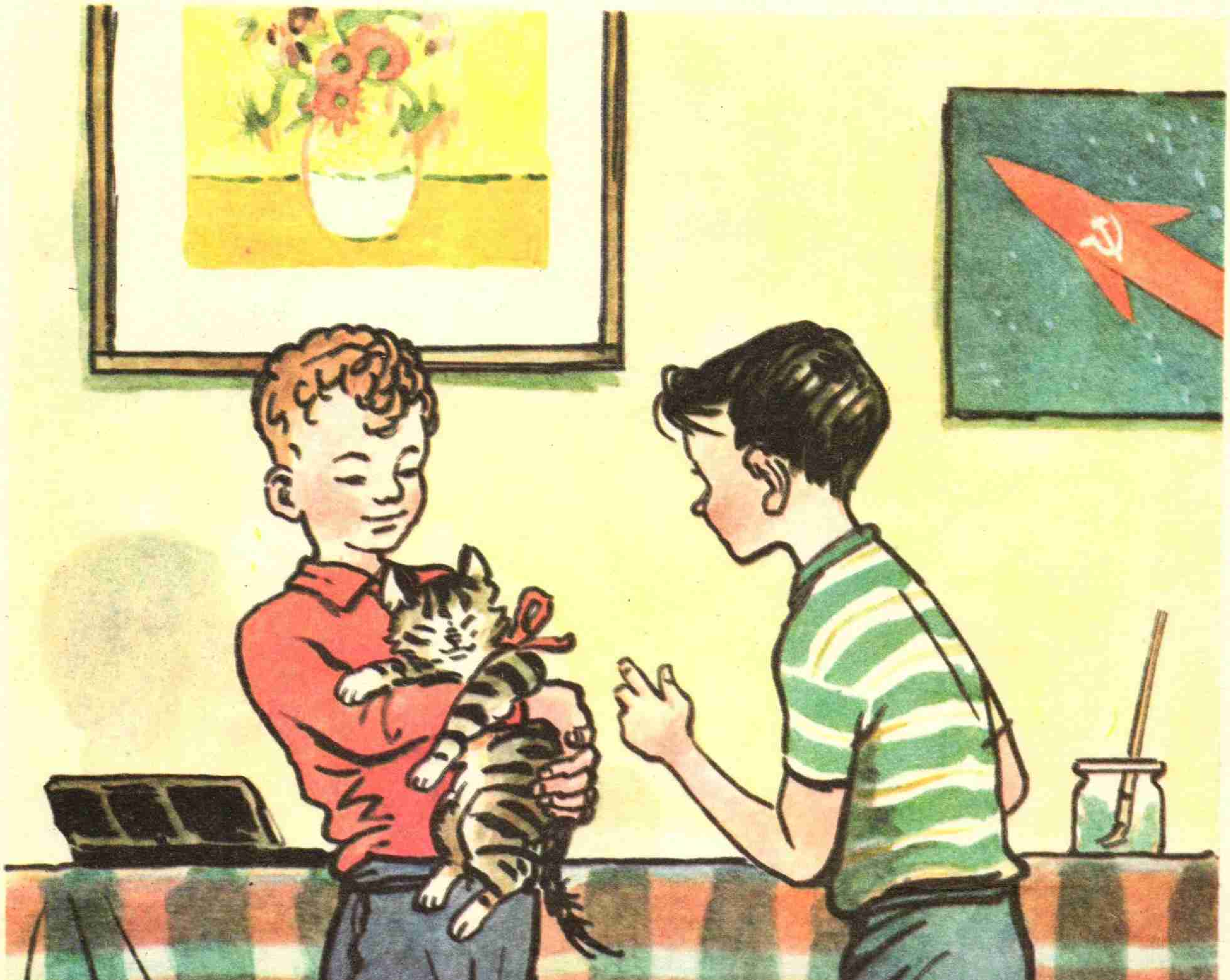
There was a bit of grey tail sticking out from under the brim.

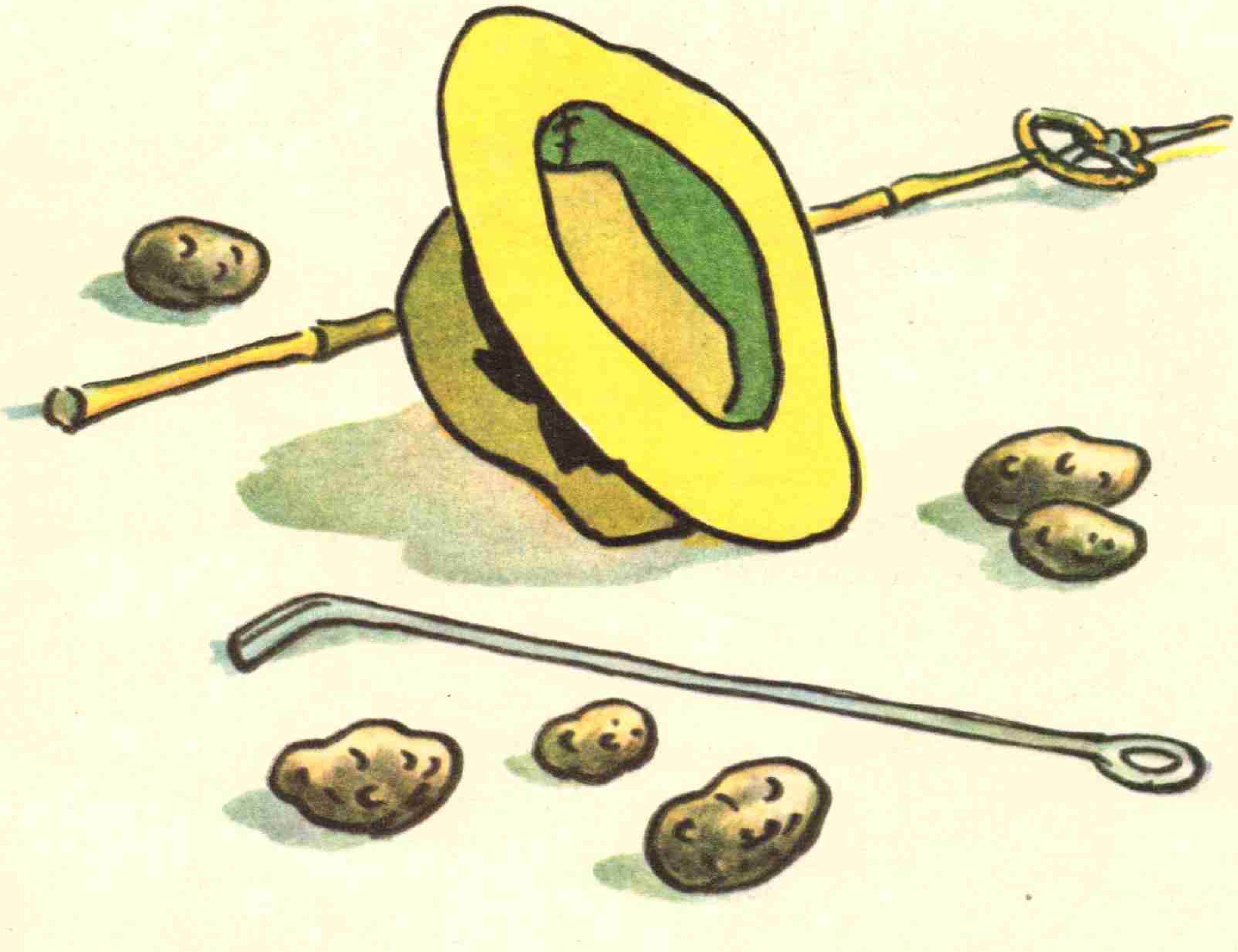
"Murzik!" the boys shouted.

Vadik grabbed the kitten and hugged it.

"Poor Murzik! How did you ever get under that hat?"

But Murzik said nothing. He just purred and squinted in the bright light.



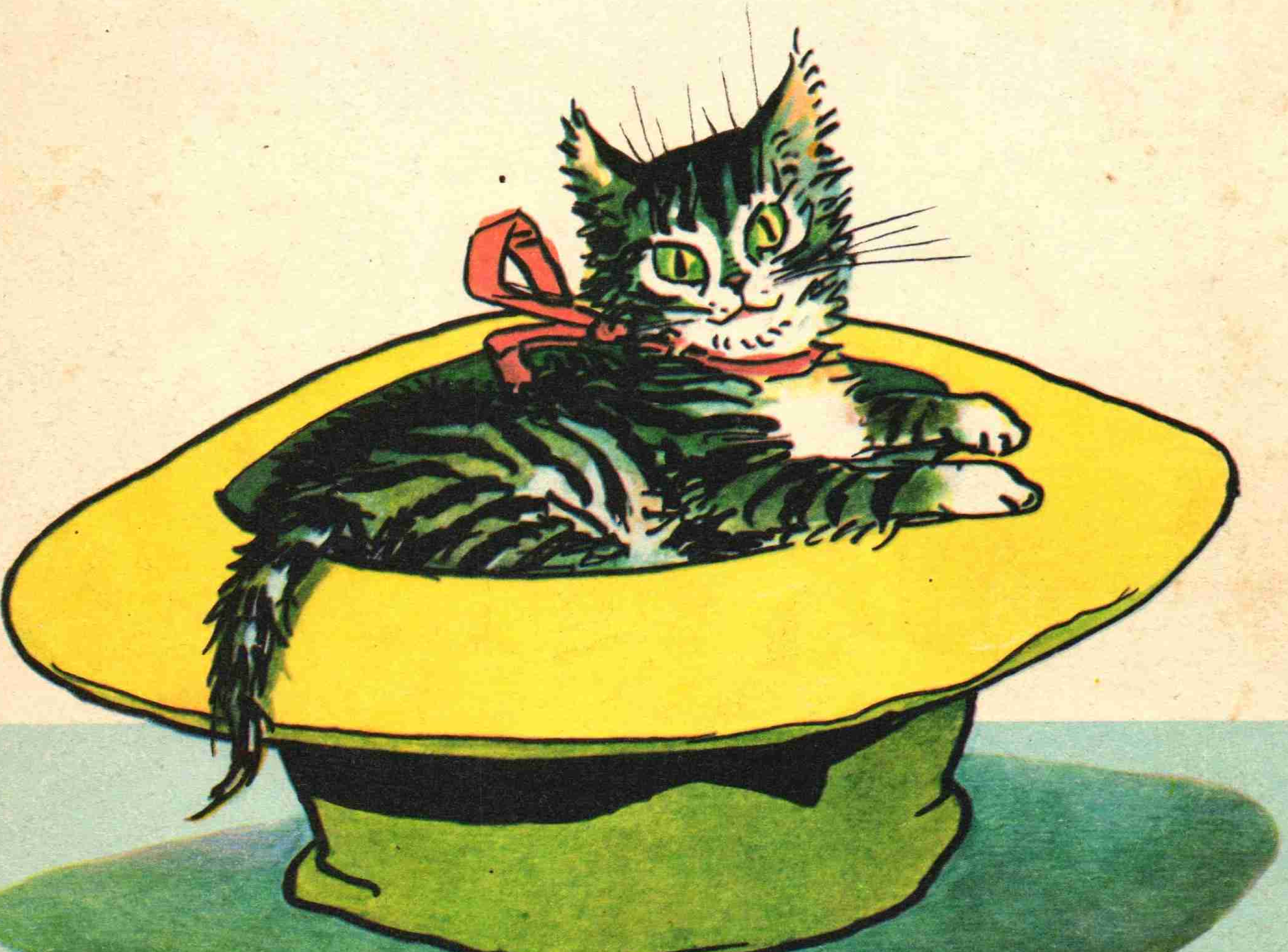


Translation from the Russian

Н. Носов

ЖИВАЯ ШЛЯПА

На английском языке



First printing 1975
Second printing 1979

English translation © Progress Publishers 1975
© Raduga Publishers 1987

Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

ISBN 5-05-001705-X